



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 15, 2010

Contact: Aurelio Rojas 213-280-6579

SUPERVISOR RIDLEY-THOMAS APPLAUDS OBAMA ADMINISTRATION'S DECISION TO CHANGE CRITERIA FOR SELECTING MAJOR TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

LOS ANGELES -- Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas today lauded the Obama Administration's decision to change how major transportation projects are selected to receive federal funding -- a move that will give greater weight to economic development benefits such projects spur in communities.

During his first year on the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Supervisor Ridley-Thomas urged federal officials to change funding guidelines for new projects, which under the previous administration focused primarily rated projects on how much they shortened commute times in comparison to cost.

In a letter he sent last May to U.S. Sen. Barbara Boxer, he wrote: "We strongly believe that new transit systems are the most powerful land use and planning tool available to our communities."

"Alignment of future transit corridors should give heavy consideration to the ability of these lines to concentrate new private and public investments and economic regeneration activities into districts that have historically been subject to neglect," he added.

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood announced this week that in making funding decisions, the Federal Transit Administration will now evaluate the environmental, community and economic development benefits provided by transit projects, as well as the congestion relief benefits from such projects.

#